

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 000552

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/INS
LONDON FOR POL - GURNEY
SECDEF FOR OSD/ISA - LILIENFELD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/26/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [IN](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: NEPAL: KING'S CONFIDANT ON INDIAN, EUROPEAN
SUPPORT FOR PEACE PROCESS

Classified By: AMB. MICHAEL E. MALINOWSKI. REASON: 1.5 (B,D).

SUMMARY

[11.](#) (S) On March 26 royal confidant Prabhakar Rana briefed the Ambassador and DCM on his recent secret discussions with foreign government representatives in India and Europe. Indian National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra reportedly emphasized to Rana that while the GOI supports Government of Nepal (GON) efforts to engage Maoists in dialogue, it unequivocally opposes third-party mediation or facilitation in that endeavor. Rana reported that in a positive meeting Mishra denied any recent "cooling" in bilateral relations between the two governments and acknowledged with gratitude that the GON had informally "handed over" 45 suspected Kashmiri militants to the GOI. Mishra reportedly assured Rana that USG security assistance to Nepal is "no longer a problem" for the GOI. The GOI would support a royal proposal to form an all-party interim government, Mishra said, but strongly urged that the post of prime minister not be given to the Communist Party of Nepal - United Marxist Leninist (UML). In meetings with British Defense Secretary Geoffrey Hoon, UK Special Envoy for Nepal Jeffrey James, and other senior FCO officials in London; EU Commissioner Chris Patten in Brussels; and members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Rana said his interlocutors expressed support for GON efforts to engage the Maoists in dialogue. Hoon reportedly emphasized that if negotiations fail to bring about a peaceful resolution, his government will continue to offer development and military assistance to the GON. End summary.

DIPLOMATIC BLITZKRIEG

[12.](#) (SBU) On March 26 Prabhakar Rana, King Gyanendra's confidant, business partner, and secret emissary, briefed the Ambassador and DCM on discussions held during Rana's March 9-16 trip to India and Europe. Rana said he undertook the trip at King Gyanendra's behest as "a diplomatic survey" of Indian, British, and EU support for ongoing Government of Nepal (GON) efforts to engage Maoist insurgents in dialogue. Rana reported receiving a sympathetic hearing from foreign government representatives at all stops in his visit.

NO "COOLNESS" IN GOI/GON BILATERAL RELATIONS

[13.](#) (C) Rana said he first met with Indian National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra in New Delhi. (The meeting was held in part to prepare the ground for King Gyanendra's private trip to India beginning on March 18.) Rana opened the meeting by asking Mishra directly the reason for a recent "perceived coolness" in bilateral relations between the GON and the Government of India (GOI). Mishra reportedly dismissed any suggestion that relations had cooled at senior levels. The GON makes an effort to keep its large southern neighbor alerted to impending developments, he acknowledged, although he noted GOI disappointment that events do not always unravel as GON representatives predict them to Indian interlocutors. He cited the King's surprise October 11 appointment of Lokendra Bahadur Chand as interim Prime Minister--after the GOI had been informally told someone else would be the nominee--as a prominent example. Rana rejoined that unforeseeable events sometimes occur but emphasized the GON's continued willingness and intention to keep the GOI as well informed and forewarned as possible.

GOI WILL SUPPORT DIALOGUE--
BUT NO THIRD-PARTY INTERVENTION

[14.](#) (S) Mishra reportedly said the GOI welcomes GON efforts to bring Maoist insurgents to the negotiating table and to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict. He stressed,

however, that the GOI absolutely would not tolerate any involvement of third parties, either as facilitators or mediators, in the peace process. He indicated that the GOI was aware of the Maoists attempting to reach out to certain European donors to establish a channel for dialogue (septel).

Rana reassured Mishra that the GON and GOI see eye to eye on this issue and that the GON has no plans to involve third parties.

GOI: USG SECURITY ASSISTANCE "NO LONGER A PROBLEM"

15. (C) Rana said he asked Mishra if the GOI had concerns or reservations regarding US and UK security assistance to Nepal. Rana said he emphasized that improved security in Nepal is one area in which USG and GOI objectives coincide, and noted that the British, Indian, and U.S. missions in Nepal are working closely together to achieve that aim with "unprecedented transparency." Mishra reportedly acknowledged some initial GOI concerns that the weapons and training provided to the Royal Nepal Army might be inappropriately "sophisticated." The GOI now "knows everything" about USG security assistance to Nepal, which is thus "no longer a problem," Mishra said. The GOI is "a little concerned," however, about possible Chinese reactions to USG assistance. Rana told Mishra that the GON had received no indications of Chinese discomfort with the assistance. (Note: Nor have we. End note.) According to Rana, Mishra added that Chinese influence in Nepal is "no longer a threat to (Indian) security and hasn't been for years."

GOI ACKNOWLEDGES GON HELP ON MILITANTS

16. (S) Rana said he raised repeated GOI charges that the GON fails to apprehend anti-Indian extremists the GOI believes operate on Nepali soil. Rana said he reminded Mishra that the King had pledged assistance in a visit to India the previous year. Since then, the GON has quietly turned 45 Kashmiri militants over to the GOI in recent months, a point he said Mishra conceded and gratefully acknowledged. Nepal has asserted greater control over the madrassas operating within its borders than has India, Rana also claimed, which, he indicated, Mishra did not challenge. GOI accusations that Nepal is soft on extremists are thus unmerited, Rana concluded.

GOI WILL SUPPORT ALL-PARTY GOVERNMENT--
BUT NOT ONE HEADED BY UML

17. (C) Noting that the King's previous attempts to bring the political parties into the interim government had failed, Rana told Mishra that the only real option left is for the King to appoint a new interim government with political party representation. Rana emphasized that the GON would appreciate GOI support in influencing Nepal's political parties to participate in such a government. Mishra reportedly committed to supporting such an endeavor, but noted that the GOI would need sufficient time--as much as three or four months--to bring the parties around. According to Rana, Mishra urged against nominating Communist Party of Nepal - United Marxist Leninist (UML), currently the largest party, to head such a government. Since the Maoists consider the UML ideological enemies, Mishra reasoned, it is more prudent to leave both the Maoists and the UML--or at least UML leader Madhav Nepal--out of the government to fight each other. Rana said he replied that the Palace would like to move more quickly than Mishra's prospective timeframe, adding that if proposed dialogue with the Maoists goes as well as hoped the new interim government must be in place in order to oversee elections.

UK DEFSEC PLEDGES FULL SUPPORT;
EU WELL BRIEFED AND SYMPATHETIC

18. (C) Rana's next meetings were with UK Secretary of Defense Geoffrey Hoon, UK Special Envoy for Nepal Jeffrey James, and other senior FCO officials in London. According to Rana, Hoon told him that the British Government respects and supports the King's courageous decision to enter into a ceasefire and pursue dialogue with the Maoists. While the UK fully believes in the importance of pursuing a peaceful resolution, should negotiation efforts prove unsuccessful, Hoon pledged full support for development and military assistance. Rana said he also discussed GON peace efforts with EU Commissioner for External Affairs Chris Patten in Brussels. Rana described Patten as well briefed on Nepali affairs and sympathetic to GON aims. Finally, Rana said he briefed members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, where, he noted, Italian

member and famed mountaineer Reinhold Messner of the European Free Alliance is chairman of the SAARC Sub-committee and an especially enthusiastic advocate for Nepal.

COMMENT

19. (S) Rana's lengthy, detailed readout of his meeting with the Indian National Security Advisor underscores the pivotal role this giant neighbor continues to exercise in domestic Nepali politics. It is instructive--but not surprising--that the Palace should enlist Indian influence in persuading recalcitrant political parties to join a new interim government. Indian opposition to a UML-led government, even without the Maoists' antipathy toward their erstwhile comrades, might well be enough to scuttle the largest party's long-cherished hopes of gaining the PM's chair. Even clearer is the GOI's categorical opposition to any possible third-party mediation efforts. We predict this resounding "no" from New Delhi will torpedo bids by some European missions here to play peacemaker in prospective talks.
MALINOWSKI